in: *Slavic mythology*

List of Slavic mythical creatures

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Here is list of (almost) all Slavic mythical creatures

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Azhdaya

Azhdaya is demonic version of Zmay (Zmey, Dragon). Created from serpent that lived up to 100 years or eaten another one. Usually in stories they have odd number of heads, rarely two. They spit fire, have terrible roar and have evil look on their faces. They live in caves or mountains, from where they escape and cause hailstorms or devour humans or cattle. They were so known in Slavic (and in European) Pagan folklore that Christianity adopted it as perfect image for devil - being greedy and hungry all the time and extremely hostile to all living beings.

Azhdaya seen in Russian fairytale

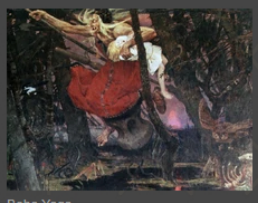
Alkonost

Alkonost comes from Russian folklore and she lives in Iriy (Heaven). She is represented as bird with head and torso of woman who has beautiful voice and is sending messages from otherworld. During winter, she lays eggs on sea shores, then drops them on the bottom of sea. At that moment, sea is calm, but after seven days, when eggs hatch, strong storms are wreaking havoc. By that, Alkonost is responsible for weather. By her look, she is similar to Gamayun and Sirin.

Alkonost, seen in Russian tales

Baba Yaga

Baba Yaga is witch, known in Eastern Slavic countries. In majority of tales, she is represented as evil being who ride either broom or mortar, wields a pestle and scares and eat children, however in very few tales she gives her wisdom to protagonists. She lives in forest hut which has chicken legs.


Baba Yaga

Babaroga

Babaroga (not to be mistaken with Baba Yaga!) is creature known among Southern Slavs. She is represented as very ugly, hunchbacked old woman with horn on head, who live in dark caves. According to folktales, Babaroga likes to steal naughty children and to bring them to her lair.

Balachko

Balachko is 3-headed giant from Serbian tales. From one head he could spit fire, from second one he could breathe cold wind. When he depletes his magical weapons, he was easy to kill.

Bauk

Bauk was creature from Southern Slavic beliefs, especially from Serbian beliefs. Parents used to scare children with him. Word "bauljati" is used when somebody walks weirdly. Bauk had weird walking and lived in dark places, in holes or abandoned houses from where he preys upon humans and eats them. The only way to banish bauk is to use light or noise. English word that is close to Bauk is "ogre".

Beda

Beda (or bijeda or "misery") is demon from Southern Slavic folklore that is far descent from ghosts and close to Chuma. She wanders across the world, attacks people and torture them. There are sayings that "Beda found them" or "Beda follows them from cradle to grave". Beda is bony and slimy creature that breeds very quickly, likes to steal things from people and to dig them deep into the ground.

Besomar

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Besomar is demon that is connected to disgust and hatred that had similarities with Werewolf or Vampire. Sometimes, historians mistake Besomar with them, saying that it's just another name for same demon. Name is made from "bes" (anger, rage) with "mora" (torture, death). Some historians say that Besomar is king of all Bes spirits, while some say that it's another name for Chernobog.

Bes

Bes is demon from Serbian folktales. Its name in English is literally "Anger". They like to possess people and animals, causing extreme rage in them. Bes is evoked when somebody threads on Sunday or spits on fire. Name Bes is very old one for a demon and it's known in all mythologies on Earth.

Bukavac

Bukavac is demonic creature from Southern Slavic tales, especially of Serbs that live on northern part of Serbia. Similar to Drekavac, it likes to yell very loudly, but unlike Drekavac, it lives close to swamps, rivers and lakes and has different look. It has six legs, slimy skin, big mouth, long tail and long curved horns on head. It likes to drown people and animals who happen to walk close to their watery lair at late night.

Butzemann

Germanic folklore has dozens of different figures that correspond to the Bogeyman. These have various appearances (such as of a gnome, man, animal, monster, ghost or devil) and are sometimes said to appear at very specific places (such as in forests, at water bodies, cliffs, cornfields or vineyards). These figures are called by many different names which are often only regionally known. One of these, possibly etymologically related to the Bogeyman, is the *Butzemann*, which can be of gnome-like or other demonic or ghostly appearance. Other examples include the *Buhmann* (who is mostly proverbial) and *der schwarze Mann* ("The Dark Man"), an inhuman creature which hides in the dark corners under the bed or in the closet and carries children away. The figure is part of the children's game "Wer hat Angst vorm schwarzen Mann?" ("Who is afraid of the bogeyman?").

Vampir

Vampir (or Vampire) is the only Serbian word accepted in all world's languages. Everybody knows them as human-shaped undead blood-drinkers with fangs that pops up in almost all RPG games, cartoons, animes and movies. But original Slavic vampire is far much different from their Hollywood siblings. They usually came from people who were either truly evil while alive, or who ended their lives with suicide or being tortured. Sometimes, evil spirit possesses and bodies from innocent people and their living corpse or their ghost (belief is depending of region) comes to vampire's hometowns and attacks people, sustaining themselves with their flesh and blood.

Unlike their siblings from pop-culture, Vampires are not charming and sparkling aristocrats, who wear goth-like clothes and act very calm and seductive toward their victims, nor they make wars with Werewolves, nor they have just two fangs. Original Vampires came from all classes of society and wear whatever they brought into their grave. They never make relationships with mortals and act very violent in search for blood - ripping off victim's throat, almost beheading them with their sharp teeth, much like their werewolf relatives. And their faces turn red when they are full. While Werewolves had human shadow and mirror image, Vampires don't have it at all. Also they don't shift into bats. Vampires originally shapeshifted into butterflies or moths, as they have habit of gathering around moonlight. That "shifting into bats" is Hollywood thing, because vampire bats exist in New World. The most known Vampir is Petar Blagojević - villager that lived in Serbian village of Kisiljevo who died in 1725. and became vampire few weeks later. That village was under reign of Austro-Hungarian Empire and every human died every day from plague that was apparently caused by him. There is also and story that his apparition came to his living wife, searching for opanci (Serbian shoes). When Austrian doctors came to that village and dug him out from grave, his corpse had fresh, red face and had blood on his mouth. And news that Vampire appeared caused massive panicking among people of Austro-Hungary. Thanks to Petar Blagojević, Vampires became known and beyond Slavic territory. The only common thing between original and Hollywood vampire is their treatment - they can be banished with garlic and Holy Cross and water. And can be killed either by beheading or by stabbing in chest with stakes made of whitethorn tree.

Vila

Vila (or Fairy) is creature from Southern Slavic beliefs that is usually benign to humans. She is imagined as very beautiful and eternally young girl with bird or butterfly wings, golden hair, white dress and armed with bow and arrows. By beliefs, her power was in her hair. She lives far from humans, in forests, close to lakes and rivers or in clouds. It is believed that Vila is born from dew, certain flowers or when rainbow appears on sky.

She could transform into any animal, especially falcon, wolf, swan or mare. She could be seen riding horses or elks in hunting, but very often could be seen dancing in circle with other Vile. She could seduce heroes in fairytales or sometimes be their sisters-in-law, healing their wounds with various herbs that are created in battles. Human girls used to appease her for beauty or protection.

Vila hardly forgives insults and could kill the offender with her eyesight or bow and arrows. Even in cases when she causes evil things, she still remains beautiful and seductive. She can become loyal to human by stealing her clothes or she can become ordinary woman if somebody takes out her wings. It is believed that seeds of garlic plant give her eternal youth.

During times of New Moon, she becomes similar to Rusalka and therefore dangerous to humans.

Vilenjak

Vilenjak (Elf) is male version of Vila, known in all European beliefs. But Slavic Vilenjak is as tiny as flower of clover and could be summoned only if somebody finds or eats four-leaf clover. It is believed that they bring good luck to people.

Vodenjak

Vodenjak (Vodenyak or Vodyanoy) is creature from Eastern and Western Slavic stories that lives in water,

especially close to watermills. They are created from souls of drowned people, especially ones that didn't meet funerary rites. Some people believed that Vodenjak is soul of very evil human that is punished by Gods to live in water. It is represented as human with long claws and tail, covered in moss or grass, or as old man with green beard and hair or as fish covered in mud. During day, he rests in decorated lair, while at night he pulls down unlucky people down into water, especially married men, so they can steal their women and make them into servants. He often damages watermills, bridges and fishing nets. People appeased Vodenjak by throwing rooster, chicken or sheep. Sometimes, people sacrificed and well-fed horse by throwing into water with stone tied to their neck.

Vukodlak

Vukodlak (or Werewolf) is actually human that shifts into half-wolf creature every night. But in Slavic mythology, being werewolf is far different than Hollywood thing like "getting bite or scratch". One way for man to become werewolf is to skin killed wolf and to cover himself without tanning it (killing wolf in Slavic belief was the biggest sin, like "rising hand against ancestor" and being werewolf is considered as embodiment of Dazbog's punishment). Another belief is that when pregnant woman dies and when wolf passes over her body (Slavs used to burn bodies in funerals), her dead child can turn into werewolf and grows into adult over time, eventually popping out of her womb for hunt.
It is believed that werewolf could cause eclipse by devouring Sun or Moon and spitting it out after certain amount of time.

And unlike pop-culture werewolves, these werewolves do not transform others into one, nor they age, nor they make tribes/packs nor make wars with vampires. Some people believed that werewolves are siblings with Vampires, because they both are immortals, stuck between Yav (world of humans and mythical creatures) and Nav (world of dead) and they both share same food - human blood and flesh. They don't do tribal stuff (tattoos, jewelry, decorative feathers and religious rituals like Native Americans). They hunt alone and are craving for flesh once they transform. In general, they are acting like every canine with rabies. Werewolf can temporarily turn back into human by touching anything made of silver or gold and he can be killed by beheading with weapons made of same material.

Werewolves in human form could be recognized by unibrows, hairy hand palms and same lenghth of index and middle fingers. And to say - wolf in Slavic folklore was as much feared as it was worshipped.

Belief in werewolf comes from all Slavic nations, but they became very popular in Europe for few centuries next to vampires.

German

German (or Djerman) is creature from Southern Slavic folklore tied to weather. He could cause hailstorms, rain and thunderstorms. People used to create little figures out of clay to evoke rain during Summer Solstice (or Kupala celebration).

Gamayun

Gamayun is prophetic bird from Eastern Slavic folklore. Pretty much like Alkonost and Sirin, she is imagined as large bird with head of beautiful woman who live close to Iriy. As messenger of God Veles , she spreaded divine messages and prophecies to everybody who could hear her. She knew everything about creation of sky and Earth, Gods, heroes, creatures, animals and birds. When she flies from the East, she could bring deadly storms.

Danitsa

Danitsa is Slavic name for Venus planet which could be seen as morning "star" that calls upon the dawn. In folk tales, it is represented as sister of Sun or Moon, sometimes even as daughter of Sun.

Domovoy

Domovoy (or Domovik, Matsich) is house spirit known in all Slavic countries. Represented as tiny middle-aged man with fur cloak, he guarded houses and cared for cattle and therefore connected with God Veles. He could transform into dog, cat and cow, rarely and into snake or frog. He lived often in corner close to hearth, on attic or in garden. He could be heard, but it was dangerous to be seen. If people don't bring tribute to him (in form of bread or wheat), he could abandon their home and cause sickness of inhabitants and cattle.

Drekavats

Drekavats (Drekavac or Screamer) is demon from Southern Slavic folklore, created from dead, unbaptized toddlers. It is represented as tiny hairy creature with long sharp claws and long fur, which he stomps upon and yells in mixture of child's cry, scream and wolf's howling. He could scream so loudly that people could get deaf from him. He lives on graveyards, in forests or shores of rivers, generally, in places where it died as human. If human approaches him, he could jump on their back and force them to run until first calls of rooster. If human resists Drekavats, their face could be shredded with claws. Drekavac is afraid of light and dogs.

Zhar-Ptitsa

Zhar-Ptitsa (or Žar-Ptica, Rarog, Phoenix) is known in all Slavic countries and in Euroasian folklore at all. In Slavic countries, it is imagined as tall, otherworldly beautiful bird that sleeps during day and gets out at night. Its feathers glowed like fire (they didn't burn like fire) and could illuminate whole areas like Sun. It is believed that whoever catches Zhar-Ptitsa, it could fulfill their wishes or bring hope. Unlike pop-culture Phoenix, Zhar-Ptitsa didn't cremate itself to be reborn, but it's represented as immortal bird.

Zmay

Zmay (Zmey or Dragon) is known in almost all World's cultures. However Zmay in Slavic folklore is represented as rather benign creature, created from certain animals which lived up to 30 or 100 years (rooster, carp, horse,

ox, ram or dog). It always had either one or even number of heads and traits from animal that it borrowed. It fought against Azhdaya and it was invisible to everybody, except to woman whom he falls in love. Relationship between Zmay and human women could bring "zmayevite" children (Dragonborn children) and they differed from humans by having large head or eyes and tiny wings under their armpits.

Kikimora

Kikimora is female house spirit that is known in Eastern Slavic countries. There are two different kinds of Kikimoras. The one that comes from the house is married to the Domovoi. The other one comes from the swamp and is married to Leshy. It is said that she can be identified by her wet footprints. When home builders wanted to cause harm to someone buying a house, they would bring in Kikimora. Once she is inside, it is difficult to get her to leave. Her role in house is juxtaposed with Domovoi, and is usually bad in comparison with him. She lives in cellar and behind stoves and produce noises similar to mouse. She scares naughty children and sometimes could be seen spinning thread in cellar.

Lesnik

Lesnik (Leshiy or Lesovik) is creature known in all Slavic countries. His wife is called Lesovika. His role was to protect forests and wildlife that inhabited them. He could change his size from size of grass to the tallest tree. He had blue cheeks because of blue blood, pale skin, hair and beard created from grass and vines and vivid green eyes. Slavs thought that migrations of animals are actually Lesnik's orders. If human befriends Lesnik, they could learn everything about magic. Farmers and shepherds usually made pact with him, so he could take care of their animals and farms. Lesnik is known that he could lead people to wrong way in forest, where he could tickle them to death and people had habit to wear their clothes upside-down, so they won't get lost. If two Lesnici meet each other, they could wreak havoc upon forests, destroying trees and make animals scared and scattered.

Likho

Likho is demon of misfortune known in all Slavic countries. She is represented as old skinny woman with one eye who is wearing black clothing. She is usually found in fairytales.

Mora

Mora is night demon that, because of her name is usually mistaken with Marzanna (Morana). She is created from girl baby that is born with blood and had habit to sit on people's chest while they are sleeping and drink their blood. They could take form of hair or straw and could pass trough keyhole.

Milosnitse

Milosnitse are demons of plague, known in all Slavic countries. Their name in English would be "merciful ones" and Slavs called them like that, because they wanted to appease them and to avoid plague that they bring. They are represented as women in black and they walked in groups, rarely alone. Amount of Milosnitse was measured by amount of sicknesses that they brought. There was no cure from them, but there was a way to appease them and to eventually avoid their plagues. People could light fires on crossroads and on village's entrance and they could share food and drink and even sing before fire.

Nav

Nav (plural Navi, Mavke or Navke) is demon known in all Slavic countries. As they shared name with "Nav" - realm of dead and are created from dead, unbaptized babies, they embodied death itself. They are represented as black birds with baby heads who attacked pregnant women and children. They also could attack and cattle and steal milk from them.

Nezhit

Nezhit is tiny demon that could cause physical sicknesses in humans, making their teeth to fall out, making flu, deafen them and blind them.

Osenya

Osenya is female demon from folklore of Eastern Serbia. She is represented as woman in white clothes. She could be seen on bridges, close to roads or on hills in middle of night. Osenya had habit to seduce men and to lead them across forests and fields, making them tired at dawn.

Patuljak

Patuljak (Dwarf) is creature known in all Slavic countries, as well and in World folklore. It is polar opposition of Giants by having tiny stature and great intellect. Serbs know dwarves from stories, like one when Gods decided to create them, but they didn't have any purpose, then they decided to create Giants, who also proved to be useless, then in the end they created humans that are neither giant or tiny. Dwarves in Serbian folklore had magical powers, as well and ability to transform into frog.

Poludnitsa

Poludnitsa (Noonwraith) is spirit that appears on summer grain fields in the noon. It is represented as pale girl in white dress. She likes to grab men and women who appear on fields and throw them on the ground mercilessly.

Psoglav

Psoglav is demon from Serbian folklore. It is represented as chimera, with horse hind legs, human torso and dog's head with one eye and iron teeth. It lived in caves with plenty of gemstones, but without Sun. It ate people, sometimes and dug their graves to feast on their corpses.

Rusalka

Rusalka is type of fairy that lives close to lakes and rivers. Pretty much like Vila, they are imagined as beautiful, eternally young girls with red or green hair, however they are extremely hostile toward humans. They like to seduce men and to drown them, or to kill them with loud laughter. They are created from souls of young girls that are drowned or faced violent death. The most powerful repellent against Rusalke is wormwood or garlic.

Sirin

Sirin is creature from Eastern Slavic folklore. Pretty much like Alkonost and Gamayun, she is imagined like bird with head and chest of woman who live close to Iriy. She has gold crown and feathers without shine. Sometimes she appears as owl. It was believed that some people could hear her, but those people lost their minds and followed her until death. People then banished them by cannon shots or by church bells.

Stratim

Stratim is the mother of all birds in the world. She is an assistant of the god of wind, Stribog. Just one movement of her wing may create a huge wave in the sea. Also, her screams can cause storms. Like the mostly Slavic mythological birds, she is imagined like bird with head and chest of woman. She is said to live close to the Ocean-Sea.

Sudjenitse

Sudjenitse (or Sudjaye) are trio of spirits known under different names across all Slavic countries. They are weaving destiny of every newborn child, including and how long child will live and how it will die and nobody can escape that. Slavs had habit to welcome them with clean house and clothing for mother and child who is surrounded by already made bread, wine, picked basil plant and gold and silver coins as tribute to them. Three days after child is born, they appear in their home. First sudjaya is very ugly and evil, she is telling the death of child. Second one is also evil and she threads child's dysfunctions, while third one is the most beautiful of them and she threads longevity of child's life and success in marriage. Usually, people pick second option that is neutral.

Todorats

Todorats is the most powerful and evil demon from Balkan folktales that is half-human, half-horse. **But it should not be mistaken for Greek centaur.**

They look like riders sprouting from horse's back who are wearing cloaks that obscure their faces. Nobody ever saw their faces. While they are passing trough villages and towns, they kill everybody on their path by stomping them.

Somewhere at the end of winter, there was Todor's Saturday and it was the only day when they appeared. Among them there was Great Todor, who was lame, white demon covered in white cloak and carried rattling chains. People then had special ritual to appease them and to banish them. They created cookies that looked like horse hooves and portion of those cookies was always given to horses. At that day, children were forbidden to get out of house and people didn't work.

Tsikavats

Tsikavats was tiny bird that could be, according to belief, created when woman stole egg of black hen and put it under her armpit for 40 days. Until hatching, woman could not confess, pray, cut her nails or wash her face. Once tsikavats is created, it remains very loyal to its master. It could steal honey or milk from nearby beehives or cows, then give it to its master. Also it could give its owner a power to understand animal language.

Belief in tsikavats is originated in Serbia.

Chuma

Chuma is embodiment of Black Death disease from Serbian folktales. According to them, it is represented as ugly old woman with big eyes and messy hair. Chuma appeared at night from attic or chimney, carrying clay bowl with arrows. People tended to wash their dishes before sleep, because Chuma had habit to scratch them with her dirty nails and to poison them.

Chort

Chort is demon from Russian folklore whose name passed into similar-worded Russian swearing ("chyort" - "damn"). It is usually represented as human with goat's hind legs, long tail and goat's horns, known to bring misery to anybody that it encounters or to destroy their property. Its look is adapted into Christianity for devil. It appears as one of monsters in Witcher 3 game.

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